

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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14

ACTION ACDA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 NEA-10 ISO-00 FEA-01 ACDA-05 CIAE-00

INR-07 IO-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 EB-07 NRC-05 OES-03

DODE-00 ERDA-05 PM-04 SS-15 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

SP-02 /098 W

----- 000957

P R 181044Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 164

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY DASMACHUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 2096

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM TECH IAEA EG

SUBJECT: QATTARA DEPRESSION PROJECT

REF: CAIRO 1934 (NOTAL)

1. CAIRO PRESS FEBRUARY 17 GAVE FRONT PAGE COVERAGE TO CURRENT QATTARA DEPRESSION FEASIBILITY STUDY GROUP ACTIVITIES UNDER HEADLINES CLAIMING AMERICAN EXPERTS ARE LEADING STUDIES OF USES OF PEACEFUL NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES IN DIGGING CANAL. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, THIS IS FIRST PUBLICITY GIVEN TO ACTIVITIES OF GROUP SINCE PRESIDENT SADAT ORDERED FEASIBILITY STUDIES LAST SUMMER.

2. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, SOME OF WHICH ATTRIBUTED TO CONFIDENTIAL

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MINELECTRICITY UNDERSEC MAHER ABAZA, THREE U.S. EXPERTS

WORKING FOR "AMERICAN ORGANIZATION FOR GEOUNUCLEAR SERVICES" (WHICH GIVES STORY OFFICIAL CHARACTER SINCE ALL ORGANIZATIONS IN EGYPT ARE GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED) ARE CHARGED WITH DECIDING WHERE AND HOW TO USE CLEAN NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES IN DIGGING CANAL FROM MEDITERRANEAN TO QATTARA DEPRESSION. EXPERTS REPORTEDLY HAVE RECOMMENDED FOR ENVIRONMENTAL REASONS THAT FIRST TEN KILOMETERS BE DUG WITH CONVENTIONAL MEANS; LAST TEN WILL ALSO BE DUG WITH CONVENTIONAL MEANS, ANTICIPATING THAT THERE WILL ALREADY BE INSTALLATIONS IN AREA WHICH MIGHT BE DAMAGED. TOTAL LENGTH OF CANAL WILL BE 76 KILOMETERS. ESTIMATED TOTAL COST WILL BE LE120 MILLION WITH NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES AND LE 400 MILLION USING CONVENTIONAL MEANS.

3. UNDERSEC MAHER ABAZA AGAIN APPROACHED AMBASSADOR FEBRUARY 16 WITH URGENT REQUEST THAT WE PROVIDE NAME OF AMERICAN CONSULTANT FOR ADVISORY BOARD BEFORE CURRENT PHASE OF FEASIBILITY STUDY FINISHED. ABAZA SAID IT INCREASINGLY EMBARRASSING NOT TO HAVE NAME OF AMERICAN MEMBER OF BOARD, ESPECIALLY SINCE WORK HAS COMMENCED. AMBASSADOR REMINDED ABAZA THAT IT IS NOT OUR CURRENT INTENTION TO INVOLVE OURSELVES IN NUCLEAR ASPECTS OF PROJECT FOR REASONS OF WHICH HE COMPLETELY AWARE. AMBASSADOR DID UNDERTAKE, HOWEVER, TO ONCE AGAIN ASK FOR NAME OF EXPERT IN HOPES IT WILL BE AVAILABLE BEFORE THE CURRENT WORK ENDS ON OR ABOUT FEBRUARY 20.

4. REQUEST DEPARTMENT CABLE NAME OF EXPERT, IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, BEFORE THAT DATE.  
EILTS

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS, QATTARA PROJECT  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 18 FEB 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** saccheem  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976CAIRO02096  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 76 CAIRO 1934  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** saccheem  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 28 JUL 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** WITHDRAWN <30 MAR 2004 by CollinP0, REFER TO DOE>; RELEASED <28 JUL 2004 by saccheem>; APPROVED <03 AUG 2004 by saccheem>  
**Review Markings:**

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**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** QATTARA DEPRESSION PROJECT  
**TAGS:** PARM, TECH, EG, IAEA  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006